

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 178087 TOSEC 080093

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT TOM WICKER OP-ED ARTICLE NEW YORK TIMES FRIDAY, JULY 14, HEADED "A SPECTACLE OF FEAR."

2. THE CONVICTION OF ALEKSANDR GINSBURG AND THE TRIAL OF ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY CONSTITUTE AN ATTACK ON FREEDOM ITSELF. THEY REMIND US ONCE AGAIN THAT THIS SUPPOSED SUPERPOWER, FEARING ITS OWN PEOPLE MORE THAN ANY FOREIGN ADVERSARY, PERMITS THEM NOT EVEN THE MOST LIMITED HUMAN RIGHTS OF BELIEF AND EXPRESSION. BUT THE TRIALS ALSO MAKE FRUSTRATINGLY CLEAR HOW LITTLE THE UNITED STATES CAN DO TO CHANGE THIS DEPRESSING CONDITION, NOT JUST IN THE SOVIET UNION, BUT FOR SO MANY OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLE.

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UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 178087 TOSEC 080093

3. WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS ANYWAY? ONE OF OUR MOST CHERISHED DOCUMENTS DEFINED THEM ADMIRABLY--"LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS." LATER, THE BILL OF RIGHTS SPECIFIED SUCH FREEDOMS AS THOSE OF SPEECH AND RELIGION. AND STILL ANOTHER GENERATION ADDED THAT GUARANTEE OF "DUE PROCESS OF LAW" WITHOUT WHICH RIGHTS BECOME EMPTY GENERALITIES.

4. WHATEVER "RIGHTS" MAY BE PROMISED TO SOVIET CITIZENS, THEIR GOVERNMENT PERMITS NO DUE PROCESS TO GUARANTEE THEM; INSTEAD, DUE PROCESS IS BEING MOCKED IN THE SO-CALLED TRIALS OF MR. SHCHARANSKY AND MR. GINZBURG. AS A RESULT, NOT EVEN THE BARRED DOORS OF THE COURTROOMS CAN HIDE THE HYPOCRISY, CRUELTY AND FEAR OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM FROM THE EYES OF THE WORLD.

5. THAT THESE SHAMEFUL PROCEEDINGS WERE PURSUED AT ALL TESTIFIES TO THE DESPERATION WITH WHICH SOVIET OFFICIALS BELIEVE THEY MUST COUNTER DISSENT AND STAMP IT OUT IF POSSIBLE. THEY ARE BOUND TO KNOW THAT SUCH A SPECTACLE WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR CONGRESS, Owing TO AMERICAN REVULSION, TO RATIFY A SENSIBLE SALT AGREEMENT OR TAKE ANY OTHER STEP TO IMPROVE SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

6. MOSCOW ALSO MUST KNOW IT IS RISKING SERIOUS MATERIAL LOSSES--FOR EXAMPLE, CANCELLATION OF THE PLANNED EXPORT OF COMPUTER AND OIL DRILLING EQUIPMENT FROM THIS COUNTRY TO THE SOVIET UNION. SINCE PRESIDENT CARTER HAS PUBLICLY DENIED SOVIET ALLEGATIONS THAT MR. SHCHARANSKY WAS A SPY FOR THE C.I.A., AND PERSONALLY APPEALED FOR THE TREASON CHARGE TO BE DROPPED, HIS TRIAL ON PRECISELY THAT CHARGE IS AN ALMOST CALCULATED AFFRONT TO MR. CARTER.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 178087 TOSEC 080093

7. BUT IF THEIR DISREGARD OF ALL THESE CONSEQUENCES, NOT TO MENTION THE OPROBRIUM OF THE WORLD, DEMONSTRATES THE SOVIETS' IMPLACABILITY, THAT ONLY UNDERLINES THE NEAR-HELPLESSNESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO DO ANYTHING EFFECTIVE ABOUT IT.

8. CANCELING THE COMPUTER SHIPMENTS AND OTHER EXCHANGES SEEMS CLEARLY WARRANTED, NOT MERELY AS A REBUKE BUT AS A SUBSTANTIVE STEP THAT MIGHT AT SOME FUTURE TIME GIVE THE SOVIETS GREATER CONCERN FOR AMERICAN REACTION TO THEIR INTERNAL INDECENCIES. THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S REPORTED VIEW--THAT CANCELING THE SHIPMENT WOULD HURT THIS COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS WITHOUT ALTERING MOSCOW'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY (OR LACK OF ONE)--IGNORES THE SYMBOLIC POWER OF GESTURES, AND MAY EVEN UNDERESTIMATE SOVIET TECHNOLOGICAL NEEDS.

9. NEVERTHELESS, SUCH AMERICAN ACTION WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO HAVE THE DIRECT EFFECT OF HELPING SOVIET DISSIDENTS NOW, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE SOVIETS PROBABLY WOULD FEEL COMPELLED TO MAKE SOME BLUSTERY RESPONSE. THE SAME

WOULD BE TRUE OF THE MORE EXTREME ACTION ADVOCATED BY A FEW--THAT THE UNITED STATES BREAK OFF THE SALT NEGOTIA-

TIONS. MOST OF THIS TALK IS PROBABLY FOR VOTER CON-
SUMPTION IN THE UNITED STATES, SINCE SUCH A POSITION
SEEMS CLEARLY SELF-DEFEATING.

10. IT IS ALSO IRONIC IN THE EXTREME, IF REALLY
PROMPTED BY CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. LIFE IS THE MOST
BASIC OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, LISTED FIRST IN THE DECLARA-
TION OF INDEPENDENCE. AND LIFE IS THE ULTIMATE CONCERN
OF THE ARMS LIMITATION TALKS, BECAUSE THE SOVIET UNION
AND THE UNITED STATES WITH THEIR NUCLEAR ARSENALS ARE
THE GREATEST THREATS TO LIFE IN ALL ITS HISTORY.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 178087 TOSEC 080093

11. WHAT SENSE DOES IT MAKE, THEREFORE, TO UREAK THEIR CONNECTION, TENUOUS AS IT IS, ON THIS MOST MOMENTOUS OF ISSUES? AND NO MATTER HOW REPREHENSIBLE THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, WHO WOULD REALLY BE PENALIZED BY SUCH AN ACT OF FOLLY? THE AMERICAN AND SOVIET PEOPLES, AND ALL OTHERS THREATENED BY NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST.

12. THE HARD TRUTH IS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS LITTLE POWER TO AFFECT HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION, CAMBODIA, CHINA, EASTERN EUROPE; BUT IT CAN, AND SHOULD, HOLD UP A MORAL STANDARD TO BE SEEN EVEN WHERE ITS LITERAL POWER DOES NOT RUN. IN OTHER NATIONS--SOUTH AFRICA, FOR EXAMPLE--AMERICAN ACTIONS MAY HAVE AT LEAST THE INDIRECT EFFECT OF IMPROVING HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS; AND THESE ACTIONS SHOULD FLOW FROM OUR HERITAGE. IN COUNTRIES HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON THE UNITED STATES--SOUTH KOREA, THE PHILIPPINES, CHILE--AMERICAN POLICIES CAN HAVE FAR GREATER EFFECT, IF STRONGLY PURSUED.

13. BUT THE UNITED STATES ITSELF IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ARENA OF AMERICAN CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, THE ONE WHERE THE MOST CAN BE DONE. MILITANT PROTECTION OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS, STRINGENT CONCERN FOR DUE PROCESS OF LAW, THE EXTENSION OF EQUAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY TO ALL CLASSES AND COLORS OF CITIZENS--THESE ARE THE FIRST HUMAN-RIGHTS DUTIES OF AMERICANS, AND IN THE LONG RUN THEIR GREATEST SERVICE EVEN TO ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY AND ALEKSANDR GINZBURG. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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